# English Grammar - Reported speech

## Statements

1) If the sentence starts in the present, there is no backshift of tenses in Reported speech.  
Example: Susan: "I work in an office." Susan says that she works in an office.

2) If the sentence starts in the past, there is often backshift of tenses in Reported speech. (see: Note)  
Example: Susan: "I work in an office." Susan said that she worked in an office.

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| **Backshift of tenses** | |
| from | to |
| Simple Present | Simple Past |
| Simple Past | Past Perfect |
| Present Perfect |
| Past Perfect |
| will | would |
| Progressive forms | |
| am/are/is | was/were |
| was/were | had been |
| has been |
| had been |

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| **Backshift of tenses** | |
| from | to |
| Peter: "I work in the garden." | Peter said that he worked in the garden. |
| Peter: "I worked in the garden." | Peter said that he had worked in the garden. |
| Peter: "I have worked in the garden." |
| Peter: "I had worked in the garden." |
| Peter: "I will work in the garden." | Peter said that he would work in the garden. |
| Peter: "I can work in the garden." | Peter said that he could work in the garden. |
| Peter: "I may work in the garden." | Peter said that he might work in the garden. |
| Peter: "I would work in the garden."  (could, might, should, ought to) | Peter: "I would work in the garden." (could, might, should, ought to) |
| Progressive forms | |
| Peter: "I'm working in the garden." | Peter said that he was working in the garden. |
| Peter: "I was working in the garden." | Peter said that he had been working in the garden. |
| Peter: "I have been working in the garden." |
| Peter: "I had been working in the garden." |

If the sentence contains an expression of time, you must change it as well

Peter: "I worked in the garden yesterday."  
Peter said that he had worked in the garden the day before.

Shifting of expressions of time

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| this (evening) | that (evening) |
| today/this day | that day |
| these (days) | those (days) |
| now | then |
| (a week) ago | (a week) before |
| last weekend | the weekend before / the previous weekend |
| here | there |
| next (week) | the following (week) |
| tomorrow | the next/following day |

In some cases the backshift of tenses is not necessary, e.g. when statements are still true.

John: "My brother is at Leipzig university."  
John said that his brother was at Leipzig university. or  
John said that his brother is at Leipzig university.  
  
or   
  
Mandy: "The sun rises in the East."  
Mandy said that the sun rose in the East. or  
Mandy said that the sun rises in the East.

# English Grammar - Reported questions

If you put a question into Reported speech there are some steps which are the same like in [statements](http://www.englisch-hilfen.de/en/grammar/reported.htm): (changing of the person, backshift of tenses, changing of expressions of time).

In Reported speech there is no question anymore, the sentence becomes a statement.  
That's why the word order is: subject - verb

Question without question words (yes/no questions):  
Peter: "Do you play football?" - Peter asked me whether (if) I played football.

Question with question words:  
Peter: "When do you play football?" - Peter asked me when I played football.

# English Grammar - Reported commands

If you put a command into Reported speech there are some steps which are the same like in [statements](http://www.englisch-hilfen.de/en/grammar/reported.htm): (changing of the person, backshift of tenses, changing of expressions of time).

The form is mostly: form of to tell + to + infinitive.

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| **Affirmative commands** | **Negative commands** |
| Father: "Do your homework." | Teacher. "Don't talk to your neighbour." |
| Father told me to do my homework. | The teacher told me not to talk to my neighbour. |

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| **Reported speech – Statements TELL - SAY** | | |
| 1. John: "Mandy is at home."     2. Max: "I often read a book."    3. Susan: "I'm watching TV."     4. Simon: "David was ill." | | 5. Stephen and Claire: "We have cleaned the windows."     6. Charles: "I didn't have time to do my homework."    7. Mr Jones: "My mother will be 50 years old."     8. Jean: "The boss must sign the letter. |
| **Reported speech – Questions ASK** | | |
| 1. Christopher: "Do you want to dance?"      2. Betty to me: "When did you come?"        3. Mark to Ann: "Has John arrived?"  4. Ronald: "Where does Maria park her car?" | | 5.- Mandy: "Are you reading that book now?"  6. Jason to us: "Who gave you the book yesterday?"  7. Robert to them: "Are you leaving next Friday?"  8. Daniel: "Do you think it will rain tomorrow?" |
| **Reported speech – Commands-Requests TELL - ASK** | | |
| 1. Teacher to students: "Do your homework."     2. Andy to son: "Can you clean the blue bike, please?"     3. Jessica to us: "Write a letter."  4. Nelly to her friend: "Help Peter's sister." | 5. Anna to me: "Open the window, please."    6. Ben to her: "Come home at 8."     7. Tom to Anna: "Will you dance with me."    8. Sabine to you: "Meet Sandy at the station." | |

**Reported speech – Mixed**

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| 1.- My father to me: "Don't tell me such nonsense!"  2.- Alice to me: "I spent all my pocket money last Monday."  3.- Andrew: "We didn't eat fish two days ago."  4.- Andrew to them: "Will Mandy have lunch with Sue?"  5.- Ann to Kate: "Can you open the door, please?"  6.- Ann to Kate: "Open the door!"  7.- Barbara: "Must I do the homework this week?"  15.- He: "I am going home now."  16.- He to her: "Don't call me before 7 o'clock!  17.- The man to me "Can you fill in the form, please?"  18.- Helen: "I was writing a letter yesterday."  19.- My mum to me "Don't go to the cinema."  20.- He: "I'll do my best in the exams tomorrow."  21.- They to me: "Did Paul lose the match?"  22.- Tim to me: "Who has taken my ruler?"  23.- Jennifer to them: "Where do you play football today?"  24.- Justin to me: "What are you doing?"  25.- My aunt to us "Don't play football in the garden."  26.- Linda: "Did Max fly to London two weeks ago?”  27.- She to us: "Don't shout at Peter." | 8.- Cathy to me: "Is the movie interesting or boring?"  9.- David: "John had already gone at six.  10.- Denise to us: "Don't open this door."  11.- Dominique to me: "Don't ring Romy on Sunday."  12.- Elisabeth to Ann : "Did you watch the latest film?"  13.- Emily: "My teacher will go to Leipzig tomorrow.  14.- He to her: "Have you sold your car?"  28.- Mandy: "Can I help you?"  29.- I to him: "Don't sing that song."  30.- Michael to the teacher: "I'm going to read a book this week."  31.- Mother to me: "I will buy that book for you."  32.- Nancy to her: "Why didn't you go to New York last summer?"  33.- Robert: "My father flew to Dallas last year."  34.- Sam to her: "Have you got 20 pounds?"  35.- She to me: "Where did you meet her?  36.- She to him: "I have invited you to my party."  37.- She : "I am doing my homework.  38.- She : "I was biking yesterday."  39.- She to him: "Shut the door!"  40.- Teacher to student: "Don't forget your homework." |

**Reported speech – Translation**

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| 1.- Me dijeron que me callara.  2.- Me pidió que me quedara.  3.- Le dije a tu padre que si había terminado  4.- Le pregunté si iba Mandy a comer con nosotros  5.- Me preguntó si tenía que hacer los deberes.  6.- Me preguntó que dónde estaba el coche grande.  7.- Me dijo que no lo abriera.  8.- Me pidió que le llevase a casa en coche.  9.- Me dijio que dónde la había conocido.  10.- Andrew dijo que no había comido pescado dos días antes.  11.- Me preguntó que por que no había venido mi novia.  12.- Dile que entre. | 13.- Dijo que hiciéramos todos los ejercicios.  14.- Nos pidió que pusiéramos música clásica.  15.- El director dijo que el timbre debería haber sonado a las 10.00.  16.- Cathy me preguntó si la película era divertda o aburrida.  17.- Me pidió que te dijera que te quedaras en casa.  18.- No me dijo qué quería tu hermano .  19.- Dijeron que se iban a hacer una casa nueva.  20.- Nos preguntaron dónde habíamos comido.  21.- Tu profesor me dijo que deberías estudiar más.  22.- Le dijeron que no fuera.  23.- Preguntó que dónde vendían las entradas.  24.- Dijeron que no nos ayudarían. |